

them with the rifle: the stomach of one contained bits of dry game, skin, and bones, picked up at a deserted Boer camp close by; that of the other was crammed full of what appeared to be horse-dung.

These birds generally come with the Vultures, and with them may be seen circling round at great altitudes; like the Vultures, they often settle about on the trees before alighting on the ground to commence a meal.

[Although the specimens sent were killed beyond the Transvaal boundary, yet, as Mr. Walter Ayres has met with other specimens within that limit, I include the species in the Transvaal list.—J. H. G.]

404. *DENDROCYGNA VIDUATA* (Linn.). White-masked Duck. Female, shot 13th November, 1885.

This, with us very scarce Duck, was shot by my friend Mr. J. Taylor, of Potchefstroom; he saw fifteen of these Ducks sitting in a shallow drift of the Movi river, just above Potchefstroom, and succeeded in bagging seven with a right and left shot, one of which he kindly gave to me. These birds must have wandered from some distant haunts, as this is certainly not their habitat, though I remember having seen one many years ago in a vley about six miles from Potchefstroom.

III.—On *Empidonax brunneus* and its allied Species.

By P. L. SCLATER.

AT Mr. Ridgway's kind request the authorities of the Smithsonian Institution have most obligingly sent over to me for examination the typical specimens of *Empidonax brunneus*, together with examples of *Empidochanes fringillaris*, and of the (so-called) *E. oliva*, concerning which Mr. Ridgway has written in the last number of this Journal ('Ibis,' 1886, p. 460). In his *Empidonax brunneus* I at once recognized the bird which I have heretofore usually called *Empidochanes fuscatus*. But Mr. Ridgway has been able to examine the original types of *Muscipeta fuscata* of Pr. Max., and has shown

that it does not belong to this species. There is no doubt, therefore, that my identification was incorrect. At the same time, however, I may say that I believe I have found an earlier name for this species than *Empidonax brunneus*.

The *Muscipeta bimaculata* of d'Orbigny and Lafresnaye (given in the 'Museum Heineanum' as a synonym of *Myiophobus olivus*) was quite unknown to me until a short time since, when a typical specimen of it from the Paris Museum was kindly lent to me for comparison. The specimen is not in very good condition; but after a close examination of it I have come to the conclusion that it belongs to the same species as Mr. Ridgway's types of *Empidonax brunneus*. It follows that, adopting Mr. Ridgway's view that this bird should be referred to *Empidonax* and not to *Empidochanes*, we must in future call this species *Empidonax bimaculatus*.

Of *Empidonax bimaculatus* my collection and that of Messrs. Salvin and Godman contain together eight examples from various localities in South-eastern Brazil. A ninth skin, which I must also refer here (in Messrs. Salvin and Godman's collection), is from Pebas in Eastern Peru (*Hauxwell*), showing that *Empidonax bimaculatus* is not quite restricted to South-eastern Brazil.

Of a nearly allied northern representative of *Empidonax bimaculatus*, distinguished by its smaller size, more olive hue, and yellower belly, the two collections above named contain three examples from Guiana, Venezuela, and Upper Amazonia. This is, I think, the species that is *most likely* to be the *Muscicapa oliva* of Boddaert (based on Pl. Enl. 574. fig. 2), and I shall call it for the present *Empidonax oliva*. Like *E. bimaculatus* it has short tarsi, small feet, and a white lower mandible.

As regards the three species of *Empidochanes* distinguished by Mr. Ridgway in his article above referred to ('Ibis,' 1886, p. 461), I am as yet acquainted with only two of them. Of *E. fringillaris* of Brazil a series of six specimens (e. Muss. P. L. S. et S.-G.) is now before me. Two of these are Nattererian skins, and typical specimens of *E. fringillaris* of Pelzeln. But of *E. fuscatus* (Max.), if distinct, I have as

yet seen no traces. *E. fuscatus* of Pelzeln (Orn. Bras. p. 115), I may remark, is *Empidonax bimaculatus*.

Of Mr. Ridgway's third species of *Empidochanes* (*E. oliva* [?] of Lawrence), for which the alternative name "*vireoninus*" is suggested, seven specimens belonging to the two collections above mentioned are before me, from Colombia, Amazonia, Venezuela, and Tobago. One of these is the type of *Ochthæca arenacea*, Sel. et Salv. (P. Z. S. 1877, p. 20). I fear, therefore, that Mr. Ridgway's suggested term for this bird will also have to give way, and that the species must be called *Empidochanes arenaceus*. It must be confessed, however, that Mr. Ridgway could not have been expected to look for a name for an *Empidochanes* in the genus *Ochthæca*, and I feel that I almost owe him an apology for pointing out this identification!

IV.—*Observations in the Eastern Pyrenees.* By JAMES BACKHOUSE, Junr., M.B.O.U.

DURING the month of January, 1886, I made a short stay in the Department of the Pyrénées-Orientales in order to see a little of the ornithology of the district in the winter season; and although, owing to the unusual severity of the weather (during the greater part of my visit) and to the shortness of time at my disposal, the results were not specially good, yet, considering that this Department has never been thoroughly worked, I feel that I cannot do better than simply record what observations I was able to make on this occasion—the more so, as the season of my visit was the one of all others during which the avifauna of the district is least observed.

On January 4th I arrived at Perpignan, the chief town of the Department. Here the necessary "*permis de chasse*" was obtained, which, by the way, occupied most of the morning. Here also I found time to examine the market, which is a very rich one, and is always worth a visit, from